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THE
CRIMEAN ENTERPRISE
BY
CAPTAIN GLEIG



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• THE

CRIMEAN ENTERPRISE

“ Un des moyens les plus importants pour bien combiner d'habiles manœuvres de guerre, serait sans contredit de ne jamais les ordonner que sur une connaissance exacte de ce que ferait l'ennemi ; en effet, comment savoir ce que l'on doit faire soi-même, si l'on ignore ce que fait l'adversaire. Mais autant cette connaissance serait décisive, autant elle est difficile, pour ne pas dire impossible, à acquérir ; et c'est précisément là une des causes qui rendent la théorie de la guerre si différente de la pratique.

“ C'est de là que viennent tous les mécomptes des généraux qui ne sont que des hommes instruits sans avoir le génie naturel de la guerre, ou sans y suppléer par le coup d'œil exercé que peuvent donner une longue expérience et une grande habitude de diriger les opérations militaires. Il est toujours aisé, en sortant des bancs d'une académie, de faire un projet pour déborder une aile, pour menacer les communications d'une armée, lorsqu'on agit pour les deux partis en même temps et qu'on les dispose à son gré, soit sur une carte géographique, soit sur un plan de terrain simulé ; mais quand on a affaire à un adversaire habile, actif, entreprenant, et dont tous les mouvements sont une énigme, alors l'embarras commence, et c'est ici que se montre toute la médiocrité d'un général ordinaire.

“ J'ai acquis tant de preuves de cette vérité dans ma longue carrière, que, si j'avais à éprouver un général, j'estimerais bien plus celui qui ferait des suppositions justes sur les mouvements de l'ennemi, que celui qui étalerait des théories si difficiles à bien faire, mais si faciles à apprendre quand on les trouve toutes faites.”—JOMINI.

THE
CRIMEAN ENTERPRISE

WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE

AND

WHAT MIGHT BE DONE

PREDICTIONS AND PLANS

BY

CAPTAIN GLEIG

92D HIGHLANDERS

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

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N O T E

By "base of operations" is meant secure starting-point of the army. It is not worth the name unless it be a possible line of defence and place of subsistence.

By "line of operations," the line of march, the country intermediate between the base and the front of operations.

By "front of operations," the ground occupied by the army from right to left.

By "zone of operations," a particular district of the great theatre of the war. Thus, the centre of a circle might be "the base," one of the radii "the line," part of the circumference "the front," and a segment "the zone."

THE CRIMEAN ENTERPRISE.

INITIATIVE.

It has been frequently asserted that the course of events which have taken place in the Crimea was foreseen by no one. It has also been said, that even if any one prognosticated disaster, no one was capable of projecting a better plan of operations than that carried out by the allied Generals. Disasters grew upon us, it is alleged ; and it was easy for others to be prophets after the event, and to suggest the remedy when the disease was developed. At all events, England is not to blame because she has neither a Hannibal nor a Cæsar—except, indeed, in so far as she has failed to put the Queen's army under command of the East India Company's officers. It

was quite right to begin with the siege ; but that having proved a failure, now let us take the field. Such are among the most recent reflections of the *Times*.

It will be seen by those who shall peruse the following letters, that it is a mistake to suppose that no one foresaw the dangers which have attended the prosecution of the Crimean enterprise. My predictions have become, with the exceptions noted, history. Nor will the reader find that I took refuge in mere general surmise, or gave vent to morbid apprehension. He will find that within two days after the receipt of intelligence that the Allies had sat down on the south side of Sebastopol, I recorded my reasons for believing, that if a *coup de main* had failed, the fortress would hold out till the relieving army should be disposed of. He will also find that, previous to the receipt of intelligence in England of the situation of Prince Menschikoff's army, after its retreat from the Alma, I clearly pointed out the nature of the enemy's strategical plan. He will see that I gave warning of the battle of Inkermann, and of the exact nature of

the tactics of the Russians upon that critical day. By my fourth letter—my first plan—he will discover that, having already predicted the action of Balaklava, should the strategical operation which presaged it—viz. the occupation of the southern range of mountains, with their few and defensible defiles—be acted on by the Russians, I counselled that the Allies should seize those defiles. He will perceive, also, that I had an eye to the army wintering in the Crimea. Finally, I direct his attention to my Plan of Campaign, submitted to an eminent statesman in the early part of last December, proving, as that does, that the moment I learnt that the allied Generals had been outwitted by the enemy, I comprehended their position and the necessity for a change of their basis of operations.

In order that he may the better follow me in my predictions and plans, I beg to impress upon the reader that there have been four great crises in the Crimean enterprise, besides that of the disembarkation of the army in the presence of Prince Menschikoff. I do not, of course, allude to Alma, Balaklava, or Inkermann: these, it is obvious,

were crises, because they were battles. I am speaking of strategy, and those resolutions, or want of resolutions, on the part of commanders, on which hang the fates of campaigns. The four crises were these—1st, When the allied Generals resolved to lay siege to Sebastopol in place of attempting a *coup de main*;—2d, When the Russians resolved to seize the mountain passes which command the valleys of Tchorguna and Baidar, and the south coast road;—3d, When the Turkish army occupied Eupatoria;—4th, When the peninsula of Kertch was invaded at its most eastern extremity, and the Russian generals were warned to put Kaffa and Arabat in the highest possible state of defence. The opinions which I formed, and by which I still abide, upon all these crises, will be found in the following letters.

LETTER I.

PREDICTIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[*Published October 12, 1854.*]

SIR,—As yours seems to be the only daily journal that takes a calm view of the Crimean enterprise, perhaps, should you think the few observations contained in this letter calculated to throw light, in the absence of reliable information, on the prospects of the allied army, you will give them a place in your columns.

First, as to what *has* happened, and then as to what *may* happen.

When the Russian general was defeated on the Alma, he retired probably to the Katscha; and, as he was strong in cavalry, while the Allies were weak in that arm, he carried off, we know, almost all his artillery. He was numerically weaker than the Allies, and, in expectation of reinforcements, it was not his policy to risk everything

on a battle. Because the Allies were so much stronger than the enemy, they had turned his position on both flanks,* attacking him at the same time in front. When he found his position thus turned, he contented himself with having made a brave defence, and withdrew, protected by his cavalry, behind the Katscha.

He may or he may not have risked another battle here ; as he was not followed up for two or three days, he perhaps retired to the Belbek, whence he sent his wounded to Sebastopol, drawing off such reinforcements from that place as it could spare. He determined to dispute the march of the allied army to the north fortifications of Sebastopol ; but, prepared for a defeat, he made up his mind in the event of its occurring to draw off to his own right and the allied left. He was defeated as he foresaw, and he accordingly threw back his left behind a river which is tributary to the Belbek ; and pressed, probably, again, he again threw it back, defending himself on this river. He

* Such was the first account of the battle. It proved, however, that the Russian position was too strong to turn on the right. The attempt failed.

retired then along the Simpheropol road, keeping up thus his communications with Perekop, and securing a line of operations whence he could both intercept supplies of provisions for the allied army from the north, and threaten their left and rear should they invest Sebastopol on the north side.

It is possible that the allied Generals had from the first no other intention than that of occupying the little peninsula which forms the south side of Sebastopol harbour. Perhaps when Sir G. Brown reconnoitred Sebastopol, he at once discovered that if these heights were in possession of the Allies the marine forts would be at the mercy of the besiegers. But the defensibility of the ground will also account for the Allies declining an attempt to land on its south coast. To draw off the attention of the defenders then, as well as to ascertain the number of the forces outside the fortress, it was determined to land the main army to the north. Supposing Menschikoff to have foreseen their design of making for the heights of Balaklava, he could only defeat it by retiring before them and losing his direct communication with Simphe-

ropol, in which case the victorious army would perhaps have shut him up in this barren peninsula, and attacked Sebastopol from the north side. He preferred to keep open his communication with Simpheropol.

It is not unlikely that the Allies made a feint attack on the Russians when the latter retired behind the tributary of the Belbek. It is probable that they, at the same time, made a feint advance on Sebastopol. They, in reality, however, advanced from the centre along the Balaklava road, the forces which on either side pretended to attack the Russians forming a strong rear-guard. Thus the Russians were deceived, and Balaklava gained.

A river which feeds Sebastopol, flowing from the south-east, became, probably, the Allies' line of defence. Immediately west of it is a line of heights, which look down on Sebastopol. This river crosses the Simpheropol road, or rather the road which conducts from Balaklava into the Simpheropol one. This and the western road that leads to Sebastopol form two sides of a

triangle of which the south-western is the base. The western road is seven miles long; the eastern, from Balaklava to where it falls into the Simpheropol road, eleven miles; and from this junction to Simpheropol the distance is forty-five miles.

The distance from Simpheropol to Perekop is about one hundred miles. Divide this by six and you have four days' march of sixteen miles, and two of eighteen. The battle of the Alma was fought on the 20th, and we heard that about the same time General Osten-Sacken had entered the Crimea at the head of forty-three battalions. On the 26th he was probably then at Simpheropol, within three days' march of the army which had on that day been beaten on the Belbek, and which retired along the Simpheropol road. Now, did he join the whole of his forces to those of Prince Menschikoff, and advance towards the peninsula, as I may call it, of the Balaklava? Or, knowing the strength of Sebastopol to be such that it could hold out for a week, did he observe the Allies from the north, and detach a large force by

Aloushta, thus approaching Balaklava by *the south-eastern road*?

I am merely attempting to point out the difficulties with which the Allies have still to contend. I cannot answer these questions which I have put. But it is obvious that, in the first case, another sanguinary battle must be fought before Sebastopol can be assaulted; and, in the second case, the Allies must extend and therefore weaken their line of defence, carrying it to the Aloushta road, which they must defend. Now, I put it to your readers, whether it be an easy job to assault a first-rate fortress, and have to defend at the same time your right flank (for, remember that the moment the assault on Sebastopol begins the Allies present their right to the river and hills which before guarded their front)—I say, is it an easy matter to assault Sebastopol, and guard against an attack on your right flank from Menschikoff, reinforced, on the Simpheropol road, and another on your rear and right from Osten-Sacken coming up along the south-eastern shore?

It would appear, then, that the fall of Sebastopol depended upon its being assaulted by sea

and land a day or two after the Allies took possession of the Balaklava peninsula; that even then they had to attack it under the observation of Prince Menschikoff; and that if it really were capable of a fair defence, there was every probability of its being necessary either to fight a battle outside simultaneously with the assault on the fortress, or to interrupt the siege in order to fight this battle with a probability of victory. It would also appear, either that Sebastopol has fallen by this time, or that the expedition is likely to prove a failure. Attacked it must have been, if not with success immediate and complete, then with the certainty of the besiegers having to fight a battle with an enemy of equal and perhaps superior numbers. In this case, I cannot contemplate without alarm the position of the allied army. Showing front to Osten-Sacken and Menschikoff approaching its flanks by the roads above indicated, it would have on its left and rearwards Sebastopol bristling with guns, and defended by a garrison encouraged by successful resistance and the presence of reinforcements to turn the defence into attack. Should the Allies fail in holding the

heights of Balaklava, they would, perhaps, notwithstanding the presence of men-of-war in the harbour, be obliged to surrender at discretion. For the same cause which made the place, if defended with any vigour, so inaccessible from the sea, and which induced the Allies to turn the harbour of Sebastopol at the risk of forcing three rivers, and fighting their way through a hilly country, would now make an embarkation in the presence of a victorious enemy a work of such carnage as would even surpass that imaginary one suffered by the Russians, and proclaimed with such confidence by every journal, I believe, except the *Morning Herald*, and credited so thoughtlessly by the public.

These thoughts of mine are the results of considerable reflection on the art of war. In war, time is everything. If the allied Generals have so studied time as that, uninterrupted by the reinforced Russians, they could besiege Sebastopol from Balaklava, their plan of campaign has been marked by that boldness and invention which are peculiar to the genius of war. If they have underrated their difficulties, and miscalculated their time, let us

give them credit for their gallantry, but wait in patience for the result. At all events, let us forbear to holloa before we are out of the wood.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

AN OFFICER,

Who has never seen a shot fired, and who, wishing that he were with Lord Raglan, cannot shut his eyes to the perils of the Crimean enterprise.

LETTER II.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[*Published October 20, 1854.*]

SIR,—As you did me the honour to publish my former letter on the prospects of the allied army, perhaps you will give a place to this also. My object in writing to you is to give expression to opinions which have been deliberately formed, but which are based, of course, either upon surmise or upon rumour as to the resources of the enemy. I do not know whether General Osten-Sacken did enter the Crimea on the 20th September—I only know that it was alleged that he had done so. If he did, he certainly might have arrived at Simpheropol on the 26th or 27th ult. ; in which case he might, by taking the Aloushta route, have menaced the right of the allied army on the morning of the 5th October.

Your correspondent, “ An Observer,” seems to have imagined that I had supposed this General to

have moved from *Odessa* on the 20th September. Those who read my letter more carefully will have seen that I gave him six days' march from Perekop to Simpheropol. As to the nature of the country, we know that a good road traverses it; and it is to be supposed both that the Russians were in excellent condition for their march, and that they would make it with as much rapidity as possible.

Before making the few observations which I have at present to offer, I will say a word as to the Isthmus of Perekop, the judiciousness of seizing it and making it the basis of operations, and the reason why this was not done.

In order safely to take possession of this gateway of the Crimea it would have been necessary either that the Russians in Bessarabia should have been pressed by Omer Pacha, or that a large force in addition to that commanded by Lord Raglan should have been despatched to Perekop to defend the lines. Moreover, if Perekop had been chosen as the basis of operations, it must have been taken possession of early in the summer; for in this case the plan

of the Allies would have been to drive on the enemy, securing the country in their own rear, and making Sebastopol their last point of attack. All which implied the energetic conduct of the war by the Aberdeen Cabinet months ago, and the non-intervention of Austria in the Danubian principalities, except as an ally in arms. Furthermore, a very large force of cavalry must have been despatched to the Crimea in order to oppose those horsemen, who, your correspondent justly fears, may prove formidable to the Allies, but who, he may believe me, would be much more so in the steppes and plains which lie north of Sebastopol than they are likely to be in the defiles and wooded hills about Balaklava.

Probably, had the allied army landed at Perekop as soon as Omer Pacha was free to pursue a career of conquest, they might have lost less time in traversing the peninsula of the Crimea, and defeating any forces which might have given them battle, than they wasted amid *ennui* and pestilence at Varna. In this case also the defences of Sebastopol would not have been

augmented as they have been since. Not being informed, however, as to the force of Russians in the Crimea in July or August last, and the question bearing in no way now on the enterprise, however much it may affect the character of the Aberdeen Cabinet, I will pass once more to the consideration of what *had* happened up to the seizure of Balaklava, and what may have happened since, or may happen yet.

Jomini has two maxims, the soundness of one of which was proved at the Alma; while that of the other—supposing the Russians to be in respectable force within and outside of Sebastopol—makes me look with anxiety at the position of the Allies. They are these:—

1. The general who remains on the defensive ought always to be beaten.

2. The initiative being the surest guarantee of victory, an army covering a siege should never wait to be attacked.

The position of the Russians at the Alma was admirably chosen, and, up to the crisis of the battle, well defended. There is a moment, however, in every action when the defence, if it

have been successful, should be turned into attack. There is a point also in every position at which a force should be in readiness to take advantage of this moment. The favourable time for the Russians had not, I think, arrived. It was, however, at hand. When the blazing village had divided the 2d division, and the 23d Regiment was repulsed, the Russians were guilty of a capital error. They should have calmly waited in their intrenchments for the advance of the Fusiliers,* and when the line wavered—as it must have wavered—beneath their storm of shot, they should have broken it with an overwhelming force. As it was, they rushed impulsively after the 23d, and fled precipitately before the Fusiliers. It was the animus of a pursuit which alone brought the latter inside of the intrenchments.

In place of the defenders of the redoubt, emboldened by the effect of their fire, rushing thus impulsively to the charge, a fresh force ought to have been held in readiness to support an attack on the Guards, and should have ad-

* I meant the Guards.

vanced through the opening of the division in column of sections, wheeled into line to its right, and rolled up the English left; which should have been attacked at the same time by the force that all the morning had menaced it on the left. Simultaneously the Russian general should have changed front to his right, obliquely throwing it forward in echelon, and holding the French in check with as strong a force as he could spare; and he should have advanced on the left wing of the English army, which would now have been completely out-flanked. I feel the more satisfied that this was his main chance, as it is admitted that the French were isolated* from the English all the day. Moreover, the battle thus converted into an attack by the main body of the Russians on the English left, the enemy's cavalry, in which he was so superior, would have embarrassed the reserve, the left of the left wing would have been driven in on General Cathcart's division, which was *en potence* (thrown back, i.e.,

* Since this was originally published, I have heard from an eye-witness that the left of the French was in close communication with the right of the English. I have no doubt, however, that the centre of the latter was weak enough to invite attack.

from the left of our attacking force', and, the Allies on this point routed, the Russian should have taken up a position covering Simpheropol ('as he does at present'), and ready at the proper time to attack the remainder of the foe. As to the force with which he had held the French in check, it might have been instructed either to retire upon Sebastopol, in order to strengthen the garrison, or northwards to the Simpheropol road, where the French could not with safety have followed it. As it was, the Russian remaining on the defensive lost the battle, but was permitted, we have seen, to adopt those very measures which would have been the best fruits of victory.

I surmised in my former letter that he had defended the Belbek, and that, defeated, he retired behind a river which is tributary to it, and thence again towards Simpheropol. It appears that the battle which he offered on the Belbek was not accepted. I have little doubt, however, that the division which the English so unexpectedly routed when they emerged from the forest, had been intended to watch them as they approached this

river. It was meant, I believe, to attack them on their left when they should attempt the passage. Be this as it may, however, the fact remains—full of importance—that the Russian army is in communication both with Sebastopol and Simpheropol, and that the Allies, so far as we as yet know, have shut themselves up in the peninsula of the Balaklava.

What I desire to point out to the public is, the improbability of the fall of Sebastopol except after another battle outside its walls. And if Jomini's maxims, above quoted, be, as I believe them to be, both sound ones, they point to the circumstance that the peninsula of the Balaklava is not the most favourable place in which this battle could be fought. In a word, I consider that the position of the Allies is a very critical one, and that they must therefore partially retrace their steps before Sebastopol can fall.

I have already shown that the assault of Sebastopol in the face of two Russian armies moving respectively from Simpheropol and Aloushta, would be a perilous enterprise, inasmuch as the Allies would present the right of their line to these

armies ; or, supposing their right wing thrown back upon the Tchernaya river (which feeds the harbour), because it would offer to the foe both its flanks. It follows that a force must be detached from Balaklava to find out and attack the Russians. Every day lost by us is a day gained to them — gained doubly, in point of numbers, and in point of recovery from their defeat on the Alma. Jomini's maxim, on which I base my opinion, that you will hear either of a forward movement on the part of the Allies, or of a battle on the Tchernaya, is thus reasoned :—

The further away you keep the relieving army of a place besieged, the more time you give the besiegers to take the place, supposing you should be defeated ; for in the latter event you could dispute the ground with the enemy inch by inch, and you would, perhaps, be joined by the besieging army, its work accomplished, and outnumber your foe. In like manner, should you come off victorious in a contest with a relieving army, you ought to pursue it to the uttermost, so that it might have the greater space to traverse after

being reorganised. To state the reason is to convince a person of the soundness of the maxim. I think also, however, that it ought to suggest to us some very grave reflections upon the Crimean enterprise.

1. It is admitted by Lord Raglan that Balaklava was not the point which he intended to seize. He meant, then, to be guided by circumstances, and to invest Sebastopol upon the north side. He fought the battle of the Alma—a terrible and a critical one—and he did not pursue and destroy the enemy while they were under the influence of panic. Why not? Not for want of courage, nor because he is deficient in military spirit, or, as far as we know, ability; not because he can have forgotten the importance of following up a blow, but because the expedition is essentially, as I have termed it, an *enterprise*,—a perilous voyage of discovery,—an undertaking gallantly performed by the allied Generals, but desperately determined on by the *Coalition Government*. To save a tottering Administration, by satisfying, if possible, a nation whose patience was exhausted, the invading army sailed for the Crimea. What exactly was to

be done, what difficulties might be met with, nobody seems to have considered. Lord Raglan could not follow up victory, because he had an insufficient force of cavalry; and he did not attack the Russians on the Belbek, because he had found them on the Alma in more formidable numbers than he had expected, and because, further, the effect of night air, poor food, cholera, and climate on his troops was such that, although flushed with victory, he dared not throw the dice for double or quits with the foe. My impression is, that he had also found the Russians equal, if not superior, to him in artillery.

2. The bloody battle of the Alma was rather a passage of arms, whence resulted an increase of confidence to the Allies, than a victory decisive of the present campaign. It may be answered, indeed, that the basis of Balaklava is its fruit. So be it. It was a battle for a beginning, then, not for an end.

3. Sebastopol invested only on the south side, may perhaps be partially destroyed. The marine forts immediately commanded from Balaklava* may

* I mean here the peninsula south of Sebastopol, and which I have called in my first letter the little peninsula of Balaklava.

succumb, and even the fleet may be burnt ; but the Russians may retire to the north fortifications, and Fort Constantine* may hold out until regularly besieged. All which means, that time will be given to the Russian army, reinforced and recovered from its recent panic, to arrive to the assistance of the beleaguered garrison. While I thus reason, however, I assume of course that, by the sacrifice of some ships of war, the enemy have precluded our fleet from taking part in an assault.

4. Should the Allies be attacked at Balaklava, they will have set at defiance the second of the maxims which I have quoted. The *Times* of the 14th, which has this moment reached me, inquires in amazement after Prince Menschikoff, and speaks of the probability of the besiegers *being annoyed*. Annoyed they will be indeed—annoyed by a simultaneous attack of two imposing forces on the Simpheropol and Aloushta roads. They will thus meet the enemy, their line *en potence*, the angle towards Simpheropol : if so, they will have set

* This letter was written when we were all less familiar with the names of the forts than we are now. I had Fort Sivernaia in my mind.

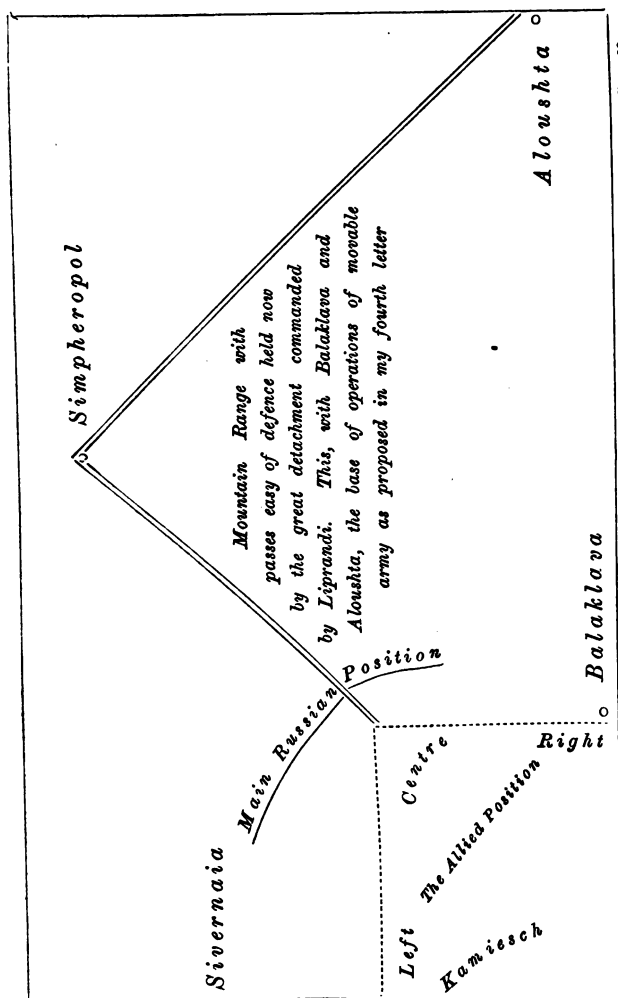
at defiance a third maxim of Jomini's, also a sound one, viz., that it is only safe to throw back a wing either with the intention of changing front in the new direction, or by putting in motion the other wing by column of sections or in echelon, for the purpose of beating the enemy with his own weapon, viz., a march to the flank. The reason why it is unsafe to receive an attack *en potence* is this : your angle broken, one wing would be thrown back on the other, and the flank of each would be turned.

THE ALLIES, HOWEVER, WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SET ALL THESE RULES AT DEFIANCE ; FOR, OUTFLANKED ON THE RIGHT, *EN POTENCE* IN THE CENTRE, AND MENACED ON THE LEFT BY THE SEBASTOPOL GARRISON, THEY MUST AT ALL POINTS DEFEND THEMSELVES BY SHEER GALLANTRY, OR CHOOSE BETWEEN A BLOODY DEFEAT, WITH THE SEA TO RETIRE UPON, OR AN UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER,* (*vide* Plate I.)

These reflections, the fact that on the 10th of October the batteries of the besiegers were still

* How narrowly the allied armies escaped this fate, the *Times* clearly explained, when it reviewed Prince Menschikoff's despatch regarding the battle of Inkermann.

I.



silent, and the circumstance that while we do not know the difficulties of ground with which the engineers have to contend, we are informed that the allied army is followed by pestilence to its cold encampment on the heights of Balaklava ; and lastly, the certainty that the Russians have had enough time both to concentrate their forces, and to approach the Tchernaya by the 10th of October, should lead us to hold our breath in awe as well as hope, and forbear to triumph before conquests have been made. Landing where he did, Lord Raglan, perhaps, had no choice but to fight the battle of the Alma. The results of this battle, however, are no other than what it would have been desirable to obtain by means of manœuvring. The relieving army has yet to be beaten and driven to a distance from Sebastopol ; and till it have been so, the fortress will hold out.

BELFAST, *October 15.*

Note the date of the following letter. It was published *24th October*. Here, in England, then, I predicted, a day before it occurred, the action of Balaklava.

LETTER III.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[*Published October 24, 1854.*]

SIR,—Having twice trespassed upon your columns and your readers' patience at some length, I should not do so a third time, did I not desire to observe, that if the Simpheropol and Aloushta roads be commanded by strong positions held by the Allies, Jomini's reasoning, as to the weakness of an angular position, would, of course, be less applicable than to a more open field. It is probable, however, that the Russians have means of communication between these roads, and that they will concentrate behind the hills which overlook them from the east. However this be, supposing the enemy to threaten the allied army, and the latter to remain on the defensive, it is to be observed that in place of the siege of Sebastopol we shall probably have the siege of Balaklava. When the latter shall be raised, the former will

perhaps proceed ; for, as to the capture of Sebastopol in the immediate presence of 70,000 Russians watching the flanks of the besiegers, the notion seems absurd. If such a thing were to take place, the Russian generals ought to be hanged for cowardice.

KINGSTOWN, *October 22.*

LETTER IV.

PLAN I

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[*Published October 31, 1854.*]

SIR,—I read with care, and the aid of a map, the letters headed “The Crimean Enterprise;” and, agreeing with the writer that there is danger that the siege of Sebastopol turn out the siege of Balaklava, I suggest that an army of observation occupy Aloushta.

This done, it will be for Lord Raglan to clear the road between Aloushta and Balaklava, and to guard the mountain passes which communicate with the Simpheropol road. Three objects essential to the prolonged occupation of Balaklava will thus have been gained :—

1. The right of the allied army will be safe.
2. The troops may hut themselves for the winter, and draw provisions from the country intervening between Balaklava and Aloushta.

3. The left flank of the Simpheropol army will be menaced, and, if it move on Sebastopol, so may its rear.

In fact, if the Crimea be to be conquered, Simpheropol and Aloushta should both be occupied, the last first, with the view of checkmating the enemy, by taking possession of the other the moment he moves forward.

Aloushta occupied, and the relieving army held in check at Simpheropol, the siege of Sebastopol may go forward as leisurely as may be necessary.

The above letter, written previous to the receipt of intelligence that Liprandi was before Balaklava, and the passes in his possession, proves that I would have endeavoured not only to forestall that General, but to avert the disasters of the winter. I can say, moreover, of the plan suggested in it, that, although not communicated to the *Morning Herald* till the 30th of October, I conceived it when I first glanced at the map of the Crimea, after hearing that the Allies were

at Balaklava. A word now as to my second plan of campaign submitted to a statesman.

From the moment that I heard of the action of Balaklava, I was of opinion that, in order to take Sebastopol, the Crimea must be virtually conquered. Aloushta, the command of the road that crosses the Tchatir Dag, and the passes which pierce the mountain wall that trends from Balaklava eastwards, in the possession of the enemy, in place of being, as I believe they might have been, in that of the Allies (and for the reduction of Sebastopol they are more important than the plateau now held by the Allies), I looked for a basis whence we might operate by a line which should take these positions in rear, and cut that of the operations of the enemy. Two of my letters point out the danger of operating from Eupatoria. It was my opinion that Kaffa should have been mastered, and the district of Kertch conquered. Moreover, I thought, and still think, that such an operation was possible in the winter, when the valley of Balaklava became impassable ; and that the greater part of that season, which was spent in the bloody work of a

fruitless siege, might have been spent by the army in comfortable winter-quarters, and the profitable labours of organisation of depôts of all kinds, means of transport, and cavalry. In early spring, when the roads became practicable, and the north of the Crimea was not yet an arid plain, the field might have been taken as proposed in my plan. A campaign of three weeks would have disposed of the relieving army, and the vast fortifications of Sebastopol would soon have been incapable of a protracted defence.

I beg emphatically to assure the public that I am entitled to the credit of originating this plan of campaign. After transmitting a copy of it to a distinguished statesman, I heard that General M'Intosh had advocated similar views. But I have never met with his book, nor had I ever heard that he had published such opinions. While as to the article in the *Moniteur*, which was ascribed to the inspiration of the Emperor Napoleon, and which excited the attention of Europe, and especially of the court of St Petersburg, its date was three months posterior to that of my sketch. I am not,

therefore, even liable to the charge of plagiarism on that ground. Indeed, the article in question fell short of my views, both as to the extent of the basis of the army, and as to the nature of the proposed operations, previous to the siege of Sebastopol. Nor am I aware if the views of General M'Intosh more completely resemble mine. I imagine, however, that in both cases—whether or not such opinions have been expressed—they were entertained. It could scarcely have been intended to make Kaffa a basis and leave the district of Kertch unconquered. And it is equally unlikely that the idea was entertained of bringing the movable army of the enemy to battle, and leaving it to recover from its defeat, and to menace the rear of the Allies beleaguering the north of the place. I presume, then, that I am one of three persons who have hit upon the same plan of campaign; nor do I think it at all remarkable that others as well as I have appreciated the strategical value of the peninsula of Kertch. A golden rule in war is to select a basis threatening the line of operations of the army of your enemy. For when a general discovers that he must fight to avoid destruction, the same moral

effect influences him and his troops which influences a nation and the garrisons of fortresses when it is known that the principal army has been annihilated. The effect is not perhaps the same in degree, but it is of a like nature, being more or less productive of disaster according to the condition of the army which has been cut off from its supplies, and in proportion to the tactical ability and self-confidence of the general. To speak figuratively, but effectively, an army in this position is like a man who has advanced a certain way across a bridge spanning a chasm, and who, hearing it crack in front, turns round and finds that it has fallen in in rear: the leap may be possible, but his nerves have been shaken. Still more with garrisons. They may hold out for many weeks after the intelligence of the destruction of the army of the field; but their work of danger and vigilance must proceed under diminishing hope. For a time military pride will sustain them; they will endure much, and successfully resist: but their numbers waste away; their animal courage declines with their animal strength; a sense of shame at the thought of capitulation

decreases according as relief seems remote ; and eventually, taking credit for their defence, they surrender the place. I am not, therefore, surprised, seeing upon what unerring moral and physical causes this great law of war is based, that so acute a mind as that of the Emperor Napoleon should have detected the strategical value of the peninsula of Kertch ; I am only astonished that, with his decision of character and imperial will, he should have allowed his generals to disregard it. There is the more cause for wonder, too, because if the army of the field be the ultimate hope of the garrison of an ordinary fortress, much more is it that of an intrenched camp. It is really provoking to read the disquisitions of writers who ascribe to the new system of fortification the tardiness of our coveted conquest. All honour to General Totleben ! but an intrenched camp astride upon a river has long been recognised as a formidable obstacle to an army which must effect the passage of the said river. So at Coblenz on the Rhine to the French invading Germany, the obstacle is tremendous, because were the French to cross the river to right or left, the Germans could fall on

their line of operations on the left bank of the river, themselves comparatively secure. Germany is to north, south, and east of the *place d'armes*. The French would have to establish themselves on the right bank, and guard at the same time their line of operations on the left. Sebastopol, astride upon the harbour, is to the Allies settled on the south side what Coblenz would be to the French besieging it from the left bank and leaving it uninvested on the right. There, however, ends the parallel. The Crimea, with its Tartar population and limited resources, is not Germany with her wealth and military strength. Were the Allies established on the north, the sea under their dominion, the danger of their position would not bear a resemblance to that of the French, had the latter crossed to the right bank of the Rhine. Whatever force might threaten the former from Russia, it would not be in Sebastopol that it would take refuge were it defeated : whereas the circumstance of their having a *place d'armes* on the left bank of the Rhine would justify the Germans in turning the defensive into offensive, and menacing the communications of the French. All

honour, then, I say to General Tottleben for rearing his long lines of earthwork, and raising storey above storey ; but if a fundamental law of war had not been flagrantly violated, he would probably have had no labour-power with which to rear his works, and, at all events, would have had an insufficient garrison with which to defend them. And, but for my conviction that the fundamental distinction between genius and talent is, that the one has unwavering faith in the science which it has once accepted after reflection, while the other acquiesces in, yet fails to appreciate the full value of the dogmas which it understands, I should think that the Russian engineer had been overestimated. No doubt, however, he thoroughly understands how essential to the defence of his works is the relieving army. He is to be honoured for acting under the conditional circumstances required on the views which another had originated, perhaps overlooking those circumstances. So it is : talent understands—can explain to you what it has learned, and may be trusted to attempt what has once succeeded ; genius, the passion of which is truth, *believes*.

The pictures which it creates when reasoning are more vivid than those of talent, and are both the cause and effect of its unwavering faith. Seeing as clearly, it sees also more comprehensively ; believing, it deduces. So Wellesley believed at Torres Vedras when England was incredulous. So Disraeli denounced the principles of the Coalition when the Coalition was as yet unformed, and the Whigs in opposition and Conservatives in office, each represented an "organised hypocrisy." So with all great artists, great authors, poets, soldiers, statesmen, and philosophers. They accept truths, and value them,—in morals, in science, in the management of men—above all, in self-examination. Moral wisdom comes, indeed, of two sources—self-command, or, failing that, self-condemnation. These two are the springs of self-knowledge ; and the latter of them is especially the fruit of that pride of intellect which refuses to veil the truth from itself. Thus Byron,—“I am persuaded that we all owe our sorrows to ourselves.” And hence the link also between genius and madness,—both believe ; the one in truth, the other in error. Each because

of its imagination also ; but the one in pictures, the prospective of which has been drawn by reason ; the other in " combinations of disjointed things." And hence, again, the patience of genius in manhood, and its haste often in youth. In the latter case, vivid imagination and fixed belief induce it to enter the lists with talent, the latter being more perfectly armed. But it is only baffled, not beaten. Its belief is still the fountain of its self-reliance. Let it fail once, twice, thrice—let it be ignored or derided—in the end it will create, discover, or achieve. And hence, to return to the man of genius in question, his right to be ranked as such. He believed. He believed, in the presence of a victorious enemy, that an egregious error might be committed by that enemy, and that he might be left in unmolested possession of unlimited reserves. He believed that so long as he had guns, ammunition, implements of labour, and soldiers, he could defy the power of the Allies intrenched to the south of Sebastopol. Faith, the sign-manual of divinity on the brow of genius, sets victory, numbers, and discipline at defiance.

I have said that I am astonished at the Emperor Napoleon not insisting upon Kaffa being made the basis of operations. I presume to add, however, that I was not at all surprised when I read that Lord Hardinge had pronounced against that place as a basis. His lordship knew well the circumstances under which an English army must take the field. He probably knew that an attempt was to be made on Sebastopol as the initiative movement towards the conquest of the Crimea. He perceived that the Ministry was for a *coup de main*, and an illumination before the Session ; and he rightly divined that for a *coup de main* to be successful, as little time as possible ought to be lost. He was for landing, therefore, I suppose, close to the fortress, being of the same way of thinking, in fact, as Marshal St Arnaud. A desperate enterprise, for which he could not have been held responsible, and which would have been more desperate still if the army had marched from Kaffa without a commissariat train, baggage animals, or knowledge of the strength of the Russian army, or of the proximity of its reserves.

The reader is requested to think only of the

following plan, and not of the style in which it is explained. Intending to send it to one whose time is completely occupied, and who receives, no doubt, many communications on various subjects, my desire was to be brief.

PLAN II.

PLAN OF CAMPAIGN. Submitted to a Statesman early in December 1854. PENINSULA of KERTCH for Basis. Probable force required, 150,000 Men.

7th December.

In my former paper I showed you that whoever possessed Aloushta, and haunted with his men the Tchatir Dagħ (Wyilkagora), would command the military road which conducts from Perekop to Simpheropol,* and which thence branches off to Kertch.

Hence I argued that Aloushta should have been seized, as well as the passes which conduct into the south-eastern valley (Simeis, the Merdvin or Devil's Pass, and Phoros, which pierce the Yalta

* This is not well expressed. I should have said, "*through Simpheropol to Sebastopol,*" &c.

range), and those which conduct into the two valleys of Tchorguna and Baidar.

These two latter valleys flank the position of the Allies ; and had the passes Inkermann and Chulu* been kept, and some tracks watched which lead from the north-east, their resources would have been opened to our troops. Scouring parties could have got meat and wine, and possibly bread, if they well treated the population, which is *Tartar*, and hostile to the Russians.

The main safeguard, however, against the intrusion of the enemy into this country would be of course the army manœuvring on the north of the mountains.

Observe, however, that what would have checkmated the Russians two months ago is not now perhaps possible. Note that the enemy keeps that strong country on the north which *we* should have kept from the south. He guards, probably with the heaviest artillery, the passes which we *must* force if Balaklava is to remain our principal basis of operations and we mean to move northwards.

* The pass is a little above Chulu, and is called, I think, Aitoder.

But we must choose another basis. What?

I answer, the peninsula of *Kertch*, (*vide* Plate II.)

Just think what it is we have undertaken to do. We have selected the Crimea as our field of battle, and we have permitted a superior force to enter the lists. The enemy comes from Kertch and Perekop; and while between him and us are Sebastopol, and a mountain range of which he guards the defiles, far from menacing his communications, we have left at Eupatoria a force so insignificant that we have not yet heard of his having condescended to attack it. We shall probably get news of this, however, very soon.

Eupatoria is objectionable as a basis, because it is liable to the assault of all the troops coming from Perekop, as well as to that of those already at Bakshiserai. Retain it, however, if you can.

Perekop should be held; but here again you are liable to be assailed in rear by the whole power of Russia: besides which, we want *room*—a space of country in which we can organise depots and nurse a cavalry.

Here they die of thirst

The Russians pursued

© Simpheropol

Army of pursuit fronting to Perekop

Arabat

Double interior line $\angle$ March of the Allied Army

**March of the
Allied Army**

Allied Army

Army of blockade

© Sebastopol

<i>Basis of Allied</i>	<i>Position</i>
1. <i>United States</i>	1. <i>United States</i>
2. <i>United Kingdom</i>	2. <i>United Kingdom</i>
3. <i>France</i>	3. <i>France</i>
4. <i>Italy</i>	4. <i>Italy</i>
5. <i>Japan</i>	5. <i>Japan</i>
6. <i>Germany</i>	6. <i>Germany</i>
7. <i>Spain</i>	7. <i>Spain</i>
8. <i>Portugal</i>	8. <i>Portugal</i>
9. <i>Belgium</i>	9. <i>Belgium</i>
10. <i>Netherlands</i>	10. <i>Netherlands</i>
11. <i>Sweden</i>	11. <i>Sweden</i>
12. <i>Denmark</i>	12. <i>Denmark</i>
13. <i>Poland</i>	13. <i>Poland</i>
14. <i>Czech Republic</i>	14. <i>Czech Republic</i>
15. <i>Slovak Republic</i>	15. <i>Slovak Republic</i>
16. <i>Austria</i>	16. <i>Austria</i>
17. <i>Switzerland</i>	17. <i>Switzerland</i>
18. <i>Luxembourg</i>	18. <i>Luxembourg</i>
19. <i>Ireland</i>	19. <i>Ireland</i>
20. <i>Greece</i>	20. <i>Greece</i>
21. <i>Turkey</i>	21. <i>Turkey</i>
22. <i>Israel</i>	22. <i>Israel</i>
23. <i>India</i>	23. <i>India</i>
24. <i>China</i>	24. <i>China</i>
25. <i>Japan</i>	25. <i>Japan</i>
26. <i>South Korea</i>	26. <i>South Korea</i>
27. <i>North Korea</i>	27. <i>North Korea</i>
28. <i>China</i>	28. <i>China</i>
29. <i>India</i>	29. <i>India</i>
30. <i>Japan</i>	30. <i>Japan</i>
31. <i>United States</i>	31. <i>United States</i>
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42. <i>Denmark</i>	42. <i>Denmark</i>
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91. <i>United States</i>	91. <i>United States</i>
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93. <i>France</i>	93. <i>France</i>
94. <i>Italy</i>	94. <i>Italy</i>
95. <i>Japan</i>	95. <i>Japan</i>
96. <i>Germany</i>	96. <i>Germany</i>
97. <i>Spain</i>	97. <i>Spain</i>
98. <i>Portugal</i>	98. <i>Portugal</i>
99. <i>Belgium</i>	99. <i>Belgium</i>
100. <i>Netherlands</i>	100. <i>Netherlands</i>

Position

© *Kaffa*

The Russians blockaded

Here they die of hunger

If we are to conquer the Crimea, we must have Kertch at some time. If we fail to take it now, we keep a gate open, through which the enemy may pour in reinforcements. If we begin by conquering it, taking Kaffa and Arabat, we cut off two sources of his supplies, and have the best basis of operations—a *flank one*.

The general who is master of Kertch and the sea can take Sebastopol—*by conquering the Crimea*. Thus :—

As Frederick the Great did in that campaign in which he had the French on his right and the Austrians and Russians on his left (when he won the battle of Rosbach), the general would operate by a *double interior line*.

To his left he shuts up the enemy in that mountainous country in which the population is hostile to them, and where, if in any numbers, they could not subsist. To his right, marching concentrically, he drives them to Perekop ; there, if the place have been kept, he either destroys them or forces them to lay down their arms.

Meanwhile, blockading the south-eastern range of hills and Sebastopol, the enemy outside and

within the fortress *starve*. If they hold out, he returns with his victorious army and completes the subjugation of the Crimea.

NOTES.

KERTCH—THE PENINSULA.

Its Climate—good. Provisions—abundant for man and horse. Horses—abundant also, and of a size suited to light cavalry.

THE SEA OF AZOFF

seldom freezes, and never to a consistency. The gulf between the mouths of the rivers Kalmuck and Mariopola and the river Egir and Fort Eisk most likely to freeze. Ice-sheets form in the Putrid Sea, but not to a consistency. Gunboats essential; and the navigation of the Strait of Genitchi is most intricate.

PILOTS.

Tartars recommended; and as the best way of getting them, to enlist the Mufti order at Constantinople to recommend your emissaries to the mollahs and dervishes, who, especially the

latter, have wandered over and over the Crimea, and have an immense influence over the Mahomedan Tartars. These dervishes are clever, cunning rogues, who love money, but will stick to their faith.

ROADS.

One good military road from Perekop to Simpheropol and thence to Kertch. Good also to Aloushta, and excellent from Aloushta to Balaklava ; but *bad* from Simpheropol to Sebastopol, especially under Bakshiserai. *But it is this* which the Allies must follow if they mean to move northwards from Balaklava. The Russians have facilities, probably, for making it passable, and thus counteracting the Allies ; but if retreating before them, they can cut it up,* when our troops would find themselves in a morass, Sebastopol behind them, and the enemy in front. But indeed—as I have already observed—the Allies, before getting to this road, must first force the

* As I am correcting my proof sheet, there lies on my table the *Times* newspaper of 7th August, by which I read that the Russians are repairing this *road*, having no doubt at one time cut it up.

mountain passes. The battle would be obstinate—the position might be gained ; but the Russians would probably make good their retreat, and cut up the road as they retired.—All this to point to the disadvantage of depending *on Balaklava for a basis.*

SPIES.

Tartar mountaineers recommended before Greek or Jew ; and keep their families both as hostages and for their security against the Russians. Indeed, once *establish* an army in the Crimea (in the peninsula of the Kertch, with forts Arabat and Kaffa, defending the front), and you may raise the Tartar population, and maintain the south-eastern mountains—at least the tracks and paths—chiefly by their aid. Ten thousand good light European troops, with Aloushta for a basis, and with light cannon and rockets, would maintain all this country by the aid of the Tartars. I say this, supposing that you are able to seize Aloushta, and you have not been driven from Balaklava. My project for seizing Kertch contemplates, however, *all* disasters. I would render it the basis, whether you

keep Balaklava, or whether you have to recommence the invasion of the Crimea.

PEREKOP

is situated between two undulating elevations, which fully command the road. Steamers and gunboats to right and left—*i. e.* in the Black Sea and the Putrid Sea—would sufficiently check a Russian army taking the position in flank, to allow the defenders, if outnumbered, to retreat. A concentric march on Perekop not possible at this time of the year, those salt plains being a marsh.

The foregoing notes of information embody the answers which I received to certain questions put by me to one well acquainted with the Crimea. It was from a Hungarian nobleman, who had been a colonel in the Austrian staff, and had served against the Austrians in 1848-9, I received this information. That officer had done me the honour to communicate to me, through the editor of the *Morning Herald*, his opinion, that in my letter of the 12th October I had displayed an intuitive

knowledge of the art of war. I have appended the information, not because I think that it is novel, but to show that I knew what it was I wished to be about.

One good result which would have accrued had we taken the initiative, and secured the passes and Aloushta, would have been the active aid of the Tartar population in the labours of transport as well as in arms. We occupied, in preference, vast lines in the presence of a gathering enemy, and relied on the labours of the army for the transport of its means of subsistence and siege material. If aid in the way of transport would have accrued from the occupation of the southern valleys, much more would it have accrued from the occupation of the agricultural district of Kertch, comprising, as that does, so large an area of country, the neck of which is so easy of defence.

I observe, however, that it is alleged that to take Sebastopol would now be easier than to take the field. Very likely,—means of transport not having been collected on the plateau south of the town, and a line of operations based on that plateau being menaced on the left hand by both the

fortress and the army, the right of which rests towards Sivernaia, and on the right hand by Liprandi holding the mountain passes and the Aloushta road. But if means of transport had been collected, as they might have been, vessels continually disembarking stores in a secure basis, and the army organising depôts of all kinds, a three weeks' campaign would have been quite possible. As to the assertion that the Crimea north of Simpheropol is a desert, that does not apply, I presume, to the early spring. And though it did, it would be rather in favour of my plan than against it. For the idea of the plan is of an advance along the east and west road, and the compulsion of the Russians either to go south and be starved, or to go north and be chased to Perekop. But, of course, if they would die of thirst after they had passed Simpheropol, it would be only necessary to pursue them to the confines of this land of drought; and the army of pursuit would be in so much the closer communication with that which was masking the southern passes, and reducing such of the enemy as remained in the south and in Sebastopol to starvation. In fact, my plan would give the Rus-

sians two choices in case they refused battle,—to die of hunger, or to die of thirst.

In proposing to keep Eupatoria, I do not advocate external lines of operation. The business of the great detachment occupying it, would be to co-operate with the main army advanced towards Simpheropol. It would intercept the Russian retreat by the sea-road, and it would threaten that by the central one. It would be a point of first strategical importance, then, in the event of a victory by the main army ; and in case of accidents, or were the enemy pursued northwards, it might become, in the language of strategy, an “ eventual basis.”

The remaining letters complete the number which I have contributed during the last ten months to the *Morning Herald*. One of them has reference to the occupation of the Principalities by Austria, an arrangement which I have always regarded as dangerous to the prospects of peace and the integrity of the Turkish empire. The

second reviews my first three, a proceeding on my part the best excuse for which is the candid avowal, that having, as I believe, mastered the theory of the art of war, I cherished the hope that an opportunity might be afforded me of turning my knowledge to practical account in the Crimea. The third and fourth speak of Eupatoria; the fifth speaks of the late expedition to Kertch; and the sixth and last gives an account of an ideal victory gained over Liprandi at the village of Tchergoum. Perhaps the military reader may peruse the latter with interest, as illustrating that law of war which requires a commander to mask the march of a small body of troops to the decisive strategical point of the field of operations.

I have only two observations to make in conclusion. First,—I have been satisfied, by subsequent reading and reflection, that my fears of an advance of the Russians across the Balkan by the way of the Dobrudscha—the sea being in possession of the Allies—were unfounded. Second,—Although my plan of campaign may yet be acted on, it must be recollected that the enemy is thoroughly on his guard. And as I always con-

sidered the Crimean enterprise impolitic, so I lean to the opinion, (Sebastopol guarding nothing which we covet—not even the fleet which we despised), that, on military grounds, as well as for reasons of high policy, the field of operations should be changed. My political reasons are these:— I regard with anxiety the circumstance that the two armies on which the cause of rational liberty in the West might exclusively depend—I mean those of England and Sardinia—are, together with that on which the integrity of the Ottoman empire must be based (*vide* Lord Ellenborough's admirable speech of the 3d August) being gambled away for a barren earthwork. And when I am told that the prestige of our power would be endangered were we to abandon the enterprise, I recollect that that prestige had a twofold nature—a body and a soul, like the nature of man. Its body was our Executive, the nerves and blood of which were our army and navy ; and the former of these is to all intents and purposes in a state of paralysis. Its soul was the INDEPENDENCE OF OUR COUNSELS, and that the same “guilty Ministry” which has

made our administrative functions a byword in Europe, has brought into disbelief. I am by no means sure that, to restore the prestige of our power, the raising of the siege would not be of more avail than the capture of the place.

LETTER V.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.*

[Published November 3, 1854.]

SIR,—More than forty days have passed since the battle of the Alma, and Sebastopol defies the besiegers. The latter are diminished in numbers, it will be found, I believe, to about a *third*. They are being augmented, however, from time to time—now from Varna, now from Constantinople. But sickness is doing deadly work on the heights of Balaklava, and the impression begins to gain ground that the Crimean enterprise will prove a failure. All eyes are turned to Sebastopol. Few take a *coup d'œil* of the little peninsula of the Crimea—no one glances at the great theatre of war. But it appears to me that the crisis is more

* The reader is requested to observe that this letter is dated two days *before* the battle of Inkermann, and to remember that it was admitted by the Government that not till after the receipt of intelligence of this battle had they a notion that it would be necessary largely to reinforce the army.

momentous even than is generally admitted ; and that we may not only look to see the flag of England, soiled with the blood and dust of the fruitless victory of the Alma, return drooping in humiliation across the waters of the Euxine, but that before the year is out we shall behold a Russian army across the Balkan.

I reason it thus :—Hardship, climate, and privations, which few of us realise, have rendered the besieging army incapable of maintaining, even if they successfully assaulted, Sebastopol. Say that, reduced to their last extremity, all hope gone of battering the fortresses into ruins, they entered the town and defeated the garrison. The relieving army, which had been hanging on the crest of the neighbouring heights, would descend on the victors, who would be annihilated. Or it might force the position of Balaklava, while the garrison of Sebastopol retreated to the northern fortifications, when the Allies would find themselves entrapped in a hostile city. To take the place by assault, the bombardment having failed, I deem, you perceive, impossible, so *diminished in effective numbers is the allied army.*

What is more probable than an assault is, that continuing (unavailing) the siege, they will gather in reinforcements. For every 5000 men they receive, however—until a large contingent shall reach them from France—the Russians will receive 10,000 or 15,000. Meanwhile, the climate growing more rigorous, the casualties by sickness will increase; and, hemmed in by an overwhelming force, they will have to re-embark at length (may they do so unmolested!) for Turkey.

For what part? I believe for Constantinople. Thence, as well as from Varna, and Omer Pacha's army, they have been drawing reinforcements.

The Russians meanwhile, who have been preparing for a blow in place of boasting of an imaginary victory, *have turned Omer Pacha's flank*.^{*} They are already in the Dobrudscha, and will be found to have gathered in Bessarabia an overwhelming force. Omer Pacha has 50,000 men; the Russians have probably three times that number. Their plans are clear: to keep the Allies employed at Sebastopol, and to march upon Constantinople.

^{*} I thought they were going to march up the right bank of the Danube.

Is Austria for us or against us ?

That is the question on which now, I believe, depends the fate of the Turkish empire.

To what a pass to have come ! Admirable diplomacy !—sagacious generalship ! The power which was too timid to decide the war when the Russians had been defeated and were in full retreat, is called on to save the prize from their grasp after they have recruited their numbers, have seized their opportunity, and are thirsting for vengeance !

Why should we trust Austria ? May not Russia have offered her Wallachia on her agreeing to the funeral of the “ dead man ? ” Reflect only on the history of the last five years.

We saw Hungary in successful rebellion, and we saw Russia step in and crush the patriots. The latter fled across the frontier, and being on Turkish ground were safe. The attempt was made then to enforce their extradition, and for two years the relationship between Austria and Turkey was unfriendly in the extreme. The intimacy between the two emperors has been, on the contrary, of the most friendly nature ; while between England and

Austria it was as much the reverse as was possible. What if the compact be that Austria keep Wallachia, and Russia Moldavia? And what, if we see in a few weeks the allied army wasted by war and sickness on the hills of Balaklava, while the movements of Omer Pacha are paralysed by the Austrians, and the Russians, by the way of the coast, move upon Constantinople?

My object in writing to you is to persuade your readers to keep their eyes open to the facts that the Russians are already returning to the Danube; that the army of Omer Pacha is diminished in numbers, as is the garrison of Constantinople; that our own army is no longer on the Balkan, and that it is unlikely to be fit to act on the flank of the enemy should he follow the route above indicated; and, lastly, that the leading articles of the *Times* will no more secure the Austrian alliance than they will take Sebastopol. Is it not time that Austria openly declared herself against Russia? If not, ought we not to send another army to Varna? Lastly, as we shall never again occupy Balaklava should we now retire from it, ought not a force to take possession of Aloushta, as I suggested in my

last letter ; and ought it not to be of sufficient strength, both to clear the country between that place and Balaklava, and to advance then on Simpheropol ?

Simpheropol, Aloushta, and Balaklava in the possession of the Allies, Sebastopol might be invested on the north, and in time we might hope either to bombard it or starve it out.

The crisis is momentous, and we want A GREAT MAN. There is one whose fertility of resource has been scarcely surpassed by his intrepidity and patience, yet whose intrepidity and patience have surmounted the greatest obstacles. His thoughts are rapid, his penetration profound, his actions not slow, but well weighed. He alone, of all living statesmen, possesses the wisdom of Nestor, with the vigour and courage of Achilles.

“To few, to wondrous few, has Jove assigned
The wise, all-seeing, comprehensive mind.”

Whom I mean will be understood by any intelligent Englishman when I sign myself, as before,

PRO CONINGSBY.

RHYL, *November 1.*

LETTER VI.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[Published November 17, 1854.]

SIR,—In a letter which I wrote to you, perhaps three weeks ago, I suggested that Aloushta should be immediately occupied by a *corps d'armée*, with the object of securing the passes that conduct from the interior of the Crimea to the south-eastern valley—or, as it is called, the South Post-road—and of moving then along the north of the mountains ; thus compelling the enemy, who was lying at Bakshiserai, either to accept battle, retreat into Sebastopol, or take the road to Perekop.

I mentioned that I had read carefully the letters of your military correspondent who signed himself “An Officer who Never Saw a Shot Fired,” and that I agreed with the conclusions to which he had come. His first letter was dated, I remember, the 12th of October, at which time all the world had just heard of the occupation of Bala-

lava, and the *Times* newspaper was proclaiming, that though the Tartar's story was false, Sebastopol must at that time have fallen. Your correspondent, for good reasons of his own doubtless, no longer appears in the field. He is content with having predicted the coming events, and he leaves it to your readers to forget that he did so. In justice, however, to one who, by the evidences of his reason and imagination, foresaw and foretold the present critical aspect of affairs, when some of our most influential publicists were proclaiming an easy triumph, I wish to recall to the minds of your readers the substance of his letters. By this means, also, we may arrive at a fair judgment as to the capacity of the Aberdeen Cabinet. For if it appear that an officer who had seen no service, and had only glanced at the map of the Crimea, did actually predict the movement of the Russians and the state of things which now exists, and if he reasoned out his predictions, then I say that it is idle for the defenders of the Government to talk of unexpected difficulties, or the unforeseen resources, in skill and troops, of Prince Menschikoff. We may acquit the Cabinet of connivance, if we please ; but, at

all events, we must find them guilty of imbecility. Their best may have been done ; but the proof will be undeniable, that the foresight and preparation which *might have been* shown had no part in their administration. And if we consider for a moment the unparalleled peril in which we are placed of being *hors de combat*, considered as a military power, we must come to only one conclusion—viz., that the Aberdeen Cabinet has proved, up to this time, the worst enemy with whom we have had to deal.

In this case it would appear that the Conservative party ought to be up and doing, and its leaders prepare for office without delay ; and indeed, whether the time has not arrived when we ought to petition for the meeting of Parliament is matter for serious consideration. It is a question, however, to be settled by the leaders of the party, to whom in the meanwhile I leave it. Here follows ample evidence on which to convict the Ministry of the most pitiable incompetency :—

“The Officer who Never Saw a Shot Fired” said that, in the absence of reliable information, he would surmise on what had happened and on what

might happen yet. He supposed that Prince Menschikoff had defended, but had been beaten on the Belbek, and that he threw back his left behind a river which is tributary to it, flowing from the south-eastern mountains. He concluded that Lord Raglan had made a feigned attack both on the defeated army and on the north fortifications of Sebastopol ; that he had pushed forward his centre along the Simpheropol road, formed his attacking forces into a strong rear-guard, and thus outwitted the Russian general, and gained Balaklava. Your correspondent supposed the strategy of Prince Menschikoff to be to keep open his communications with Perekop, and that of Lord Raglan to have been, perhaps from the first, to gain Balaklava. He was perfectly right as to the object sought by each General ; though it turned out that neither of them had attained it by the means for which he gave them credit. Prince Menschikoff did not defend the Belbek, nor draw his army behind its tributary, and consequently Lord Raglan had no opportunity of executing the brilliant manœuvre, which would in this case—Balaklava being his object—have been expedient.

His lordship after a fortunate march, brought up his army to Balaklava a few hours after Prince Menschikoff had moved upon Bakshiserai ;—but what would have been the result had he found the enemy before him, it is useless to speculate. British bravery seems to be so indomitable, that, notwithstanding the fatigues of that march, and the straggling order in which it was performed, it is not impossible that the Russians would have been destroyed.

The remainder of the vaticinations of your correspondent have been to the letter fulfilled. He called attention to the position occupied by the allied army, and he justly said of it that it was an angular one—the front looking on Sebastopol, but part of the right wing thrown back behind the Tchernaya. Such, in fact, was the assailable position of the Allies ; and though they drew a cordon round the south front of Sebastopol, and merely observed, with a few marines and invalids, and with the cavalry division, the pass by which the Russians eventually attacked their rear and right on the 25th October—though, in fact, they did not dispose their troops in a line, right thrown



back—such, the moment the enemy began the offensive, was the formation necessary. The right of the besiegers was towards the ruins of Inkermann. The right of the army, when the Russians assumed the offensive, was upon Balaklava. Draw a line from the French left to Inkermann, and from Inkermann to Balaklava, and you have a right angle as near as possible.

Your correspondent predicted that unless Sebastopol were taken before the arrival of Russian reinforcements, the siege of Sebastopol would prove the siege of Balaklava. He said that a combined attack would take place by an enemy moving along the South Post-road, or through a pass, if there were one, in the mountains which are behind the Tchernaya, and from the Simpheropol road and from Sebastopol ; and he concluded hence that, such being the imminent dangers, they would be met by the despatch of a covering army, which would give that of Prince Menschikoff something else to do than attack the besiegers in flank and rear. He quoted Jomini to prove the soundness of his suggestions, and he begged us to reflect upon the probable difficulties with which the en-

gineers must contend in a rocky and mountainous country. And, finally, he said that unless the covering army were sent to seek out the relieving one, the Allies must defend themselves in front, on the apex of the angle, and on the right thrown back at right angles to their centre; that they must do so by sheer gallantry, or else capitulate or be driven into the sea. The action of the 25th, and the more terrible battle of the 5th, have fulfilled every one of his predictions.

And now comes the question, if an officer from his barrack-room could predict, to a nation credulously sanguine, the state of things which must inevitably occur, unless certain measures were adopted to prevent them, why were those measures not adopted? We must lay the blame at one of two doors—at that of Lord Raglan or that of Lord Aberdeen. Who hesitates about the verdict? Who does not know that it was because he was without troops Lord Raglan was unable to protect himself by a covering army?*

* This is not to say that he could not have maintained the south-eastern country as far as Aloushta, had he deferred the siege.

A word now upon the position of England as a military power. So anxious was the Government to make a demonstration in the spring of the year, that the army now besieged at Balaklava was collected at the expense of every regiment in the Mediterranean and at home. The volunteering system left our depôts and regiments mere skeletons; and we have literally no reserve to the army of the East. We may reinforce it at the most by 5000 men; but if we do so, we shall weaken the Mediterranean garrisons, and leave ourselves dependent on the militia. What is it, then, that the Aberdeen Cabinet have done? By attempting to carry on the war on a peace establishment, they have risked the only army which England possesses; and they have left it to Austria to decide the fate of the Ottoman empire.

Should the allied army be destroyed or obliged to capitulate, it will be because the two passes which conduct from the open country to the south-eastern valley were not each kept by 5000 men and a few guns, while a covering army manœuvred on the northern front of the mountains so as to compel the Russians either to retire into

Sebastopol or move off to the open country. In the one case, while the place could have been completely invested (supposing the right force to be at Lord Raglan's disposal), the number of mouths to be fed would have been doubled. In the other case the complete investment of the place would have also been possible, and the Russian army should have been followed and destroyed by the force which had marched from Aloushta.

LETTER VII.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[*Published January 26, 1855.*]

SIR,—You recollect, perhaps, that two days after the intelligence reached us of Lord Raglan having established his army on the south side of Sebastopol, I recorded in your journal my opinion that unless the fortress had by that time—the 12th of October—been taken, it would probably not be taken at all. In this my first letter to you, and in a second one, which appeared in your paper of the 20th of October, I pointed out that the position of the allied army was in the form of a right angle—viz., the right at Balaklava, the apex at Inkermann, and the left at Cape Khersonese. I mentioned that such a position was a dangerous one, inasmuch as, if attacked successfully on the apex, the inner flanks of the divisions resting there would be driven back in confusion on one another, the line would be pene-

trated, and the wings rolled away in opposite directions. Simultaneously with such an attack from the enemy, who was supposed to be lying at Bakshisèrai, I said that a *corps d'armée* would attempt to force the position of Balaklava—that is to say, to break the line of operations of the English army and take it in reverse, and that, at the same time, a sortie in force would be made upon the trenches along the whole front. In a word, I warned your readers that a skilfully combined attack would be made in overwhelming force upon the English army, while the French would be so menaced as to be unable to render assistance to their Allies in time to save the day.

But I did not presume to give this opinion upon the position and prospects of the allied army without fortifying it by the authority of the greatest of writers upon the science of war (residing at the court of St Petersburg, and at the right hand, perhaps, of the Emperor)—Jomini. I mentioned, also, that in order to avoid the danger of being besieged in his trenches, Lord Raglan would probably despatch a force, a covering

army, to observe, hold in check, and, if possible, drive to a distance the force which, disheartened by the Alma, had not as yet been augmented. Thus, I did not point out the danger without suggesting the antidote to it ; while in a subsequent letter I ventured even to suggest that the base of operations of the Allies should be extended to Aloushta, on the south-eastern coast, in order that the zone in which the army was to act might include the intermediate country (the mountain passes of which might have been guarded by a comparatively small number of troops, and the resources of the valleys placed within reach of the Allies) as far as to Simpheropol. On this place I suggested that a force should move from Aloushta, and so take in rear the army of Prince Menschikoff ; and, compelling it to accept battle or to retreat into Sebastopol, intercept all supplies of food, ammunition, or men advancing from Perekop or Kertch.

I remind your readers of the substance of these my former letters, because, having still some very strong opinions upon the positions of the Allies, I wish to draw attention to these opinions. I am,

you are aware, an officer of but a subordinate rank, and I may tell you that I was neither educated originally at Sandhurst, nor was I fortunate enough—though I twice made the attempt—to persuade the late colonel of my regiment to forward an application from me to study at the senior department of that college. But because I had not taken a certificate at Sandhurst I was not employed on the staff of the Crimean army. I am not acknowledged, then, even in the limited circle of the military authorities, at the Horse Guards, to be an officer of promise; nor have I as yet done or written anything—save only these Letters, of which I think that they prove me to have learned some of the principles of the science of war—which would entitle me to the ear of my country. If I have impressed upon my mind a few of those truths without a conviction of which a general may be sometimes a victor, but very rarely a conqueror, it is because I have devoted an hour now and then to the study of the campaigns of the Great Frederick and of Napoleon, and have read with respect, although without servility, portions of the writings of Jomini. Whether my

convictions would be of use to me in the field—whether I have that quick comprehensive mind which at a glance perceives the opportunities of the enemy, and in a moment decides if his plans can be defeated by a strategical combination or must be baulked by a timely retreat, it is not for me who have seen nothing of war to declare. I incline to the opinion of Napoleon, however, that what in many a famous general has passed often for the inspiration of the moment, was rather the fruit of that forethought and foresight, that habit of inquiry and reflection, and something, too, of imagination, in which an officer might be lamentably wanting, although possessed of a Sandhurst certificate.

Sitting down now to point out why it is that our army is in the plight described, with more or less force, by every journal that receives intelligence from it, I have the advantage both of detailed information with regard to the roads, rivers, mountains, &c., of the Crimea, received from an officer—a foreigner, who has seen service in the field, and is thoroughly acquainted with both the Russian and Austrian armies, and with all the south

of the Russian empire ;—I have this advantage, and I have that of having conversed with a friend who has lately returned from the Crimea, where he served upon the staff of a general officer until the day of Inkermann, when he was wounded. It was my first letter to you which drew from the experienced soldier to whom I refer (and who, except as a correspondent, is quite unknown to me) a note complimenting me upon the soundness of the opinions which I had formed, he said, of the state of affairs in the Crimea ; and in subsequent letters with which he has honoured me, I have received confirmation that the plan of campaign which I afterwards projected was suited to the situation of the allied army during the early part of October. From this officer I learned that the valleys of Tchernaya and Baidar, which are on the immediate right of the English line of operations, are encompassed by a mountain wall, of which the defiles are few and easy of defence ; and that in the harbour of Aloushta there is anchorage for ships of the largest size, though the shore is less accessible than at Eupatoria. He informed me, in fact, that—as I had already

written to you — a detachment moving from Aloushta, and haunting, so to say, the Tchatir Dagh mountains, would command the only military road ; and that wine and meat, and even bread, might have been procured in the country which would thus have been conquered.

From my friend who has returned from the Crimea I have learned only the significant information that he was ignorant even of the existence of Aloushta. He tells me that, from the moment that the Allies took possession of Balaklava, no one troubled himself as to the plans of the Russian movable army. All eyes were fixed upon Sebastopol ; the attack on Balaklava was foreseen only when the enemy showed themselves ; nor did it awaken more than a very few persons to the danger which was approaching at Inkermann. Thus I discover that I am in possession of more information as to the seat of war than one who was in daily intercourse with a general of division ; and that whereas I, in England here, had foreseen the combinations of the enemy, hardly any one in the Crimea had troubled himself for a moment about them. As it is short, I here give an extract

from my letter of the 24th October, upon which day General Liprandi was preparing to carry out the operation therein described. Had he been at my elbow, and informed me of his intentions for the morrow, I could not more accurately have related the movement which he was to execute :—

“If the Simpheropol and Aloushta roads be commanded by strong positions held by the Allies, Jomini’s reasoning, as to the weakness of an angular position, would of course be less applicable than to a more open field. It is probable, however, that the Russians have means of communication between these roads, and that they will concentrate behind the hills which overlook them from the east. However this be, supposing the enemy to threaten the allied army, and the latter to remain on the defensive, it is to be observed that, in place of the siege of Sebastopol, we shall have the siege of Balaklava,” &c.

I now propose, sir, to follow the plan heretofore adopted by me, and to surmise upon what has happened, and what may happen yet.

With regard to the English, we know well

enough what has happened. The siege has languished, the sickness has increased, the rations, plentiful at Balaklava, have failed before Sebastopol ; and the *morale* of the army is no longer what it was after Alma and Inkermann. The men endure—perhaps without a murmur ; but their high hope and *esprit* are gone, for their health has failed, their numbers have diminished, their difficulties and labours have increased, and the conviction has gained upon them both that Sebastopol is stronger than ever, and that its defenders are at once being augmented in numbers and recruited in hope.

With regard to the Russians, there is reason to believe that the division which menaced Balaklava suffered at one time from want of shelter and provisions. But when the rains had come to their aid, and Sebastopol had so far been strengthened as to set its besiegers at defiance, the enemy was content to observe Balaklava with a smaller force,*

* Four or five months after this a reconnaissance was made, and on the receipt of intelligence that very few Russians were in occupation of Tcherngoum, out came a leading article announcing the fact, and deducing the conclusion that the movable army of the Russians must have no existence.

and to take shelter in the pleasant villages and hamlets which abound in the south-eastern valleys. They did not fail, however, to keep a sufficient number in the intrenched camp at Sebastopol to recruit and relieve the garrison.

And here let me point out that it is rather the strategical error committed by Lord Raglan than necessarily any incompetency in the staff which has been the cause of those hardships from which our army suffers. Although he did not, you are aware, take to the Crimea a single cart, Lord Raglan would not necessarily have been without means of transport had he sat down on the north in place of the south side of Sebastopol; for hardly had he effected his landing than arabas and draught animals were brought to him by the Tartars in abundance. But when he made that flank march in order to secure a basis removed from the line of operations of the enemy, and when he determined to content himself with his present contracted front of operations, he rendered himself liable to be completely cut off from all further supplies. He depended then entirely on the fleet

and whatever number of arabas and horses he had already collected. He was content also, it appears, to depend on the one practicable road, which he found on his arrival at Balaklava. To rely on a single road on the eve of winter; to form no magazines on shore; to permit an enemy to take possession of this road, and to allow him to *keep* possession of it,—this appears to me so glaring a fault, that I can only account for it by the supposition that his lordship had no men whom he could spare from the trenches to construct roads, or that he was without the implements necessary for the work. Whatever his reasons, however, is it not evident that in no other position but the contracted one which he occupies could he possibly have been put to such a stress? “*Ce n’est pas la guerre*” said a French general, when he saw the sacrifice of our light cavalry. “*Ce n’est pas la guerre*,” I, too, venture to say, to sit down on that side of a place by investing which you do not intercept your enemy’s supplies; to choose for your FRONT OF OPERATIONS four miles of earth-work and masonry bristling with cannon, abound-

ing in stores and garrisoned by 25,000 men; to have for your LINE OF OPERATIONS a morass traversed by a single road, which is dominated by heights in possession of an enemy; and for your *base* to rely upon a narrow creek in an iron-bound coast. Napoleon, when the Austrians were besieging Genoa, and threatening to advance across the Var, selected his basis perpendicular to their line of operations, descended from St Bernard upon Turin, and leaving Massena to his fate, marched upon Milan. "I will recapture Genoa," thought he, "should it be taken, by conquering Piedmont and the Milanese; and I will conquer Piedmont and the Milanese by forcing Melas to fight me with his back to France." Genoa fell, but Marengo was won, and by a single battle Buonaparte recovered for the republic twelve fortresses and the north-west of Italy, and won for himself the Imperial crown.

Lord Raglan changes his line of operations by a dangerous march to the flank of his enemy, and secures for himself a base parallel to their front of operations, but cut off from them by a fortress and intrenched camp. Have the lessons

of Marengo and Ulm, then, been utterly lost on him? Is he ignorant that it is by destroying the army in the field that generals conquer provinces, and compel fortresses to capitulate? And does he not know that the surest, the shortest, and the least sanguinary way to effect this object is to select a basis perpendicular to the line of operations of the enemy, and, taking him in reverse, to insure that his defeat shall be his annihilation? He prefers a war of positions! He must have a reason; and it is, probably, that he finds himself inferior to his enemy in cavalry and artillery, and unable, therefore, to resume the initiative.

I am led now to consider the *prospect* of the allied armies. It is alleged that Omer Pacha, with a body of Ottoman troops, is to move on the north of Sebastopol. This means that he is to receive the shock of the Russian movable army. Can he do so with success? No one can answer that question. Good tactics will sometimes save a general from the dangers of bad strategy. Observe this, however,—the Russians have the strategical advantage, first, of possessing a secure basis, the district of Kertch, sixty miles long, its

narrow neck defended by Forts Arabat and Kaffa, and probably an intrenched camp commanding the road—they have this for a basis, and line of defence in case of reverse ; secondly, they have a superior force of cavalry, and, probably, of artillery ; and, lastly, they will fight with the conviction that the Turk is in that very position in which an able general would, if necessary, manœuvre to place him—viz., with his back to the sea ! If the Russian lose the day, he may retrieve it in a week—the Turk, if he lose it, will be destroyed.

Yet again : While to the Ottoman is committed the task of making a diversion against the enemy lying on the north of Sebastopol, between him and his Allies are the fortress and a wall of mountains, of which the defiles are guarded by the Russian troops. Should he find himself then in the presence of a too numerous enemy, he cannot depend on the English or French for assistance, except by the sea, after a delay of days. What is this ? Is it not another glaring error of strategy ?—the system of exterior lines preferred to that of interior. I cannot bring myself to believe that such a plan of operations will be adopted.

I conclude by recording my opinion that the first duty of the House of Commons is to look for a man of genius and courage to take the helm of the state. I know only one of their body supremely gifted with the mental and moral qualities necessary in a War Minister. I venture to predict, that although he has as yet refrained from criticism on the conduct of the war, the leader of the Opposition will show before long that he has read military history not in vain. The science of war is not a mysterious one ; but to study it profitably, a man must exercise patience, inasmuch as he must trace on the map the marches of which he reads. A mere scholar would think it waste of time to do this, and a second-rate statesman would think it waste of labour. But a political philosopher, especially if he be one of a poetical mind, will bestow thought and time upon the laws of an element which decides the fate of kingdoms and even of races, and which throws upon the tide of human affairs sometimes a light, lurid and terrible, and sometimes a resplendent halo. It is to such a one I point—rapid and profound in his thoughts, far-seeing, of moral courage the

highest, and with peculiar sagacity in his perception of character—when I point to Mr Disraeli. It would not be difficult to prove, indeed, that it is to the combination which has robbed England for so long a time of the services of this eminent man, that we owe both the war and the revolutionary tendencies which its mismanagement has induced. I have no time now, however, and you could not afford me space, to enter upon an argument of this nature ; besides that I should hesitate, lest by my bad management I marred a good cause. Mr Disraeli, like all men of eminence, is to a certain extent, however, public property. And as he has many enemies whom he has never injured, so has he many friends whom he has never seen. I am one of these latter. For the present, then, I content myself with recording my belief that he will yet reap the reward of that patience and self-command which are, in my mind—gathering as I do, from his earlier history, that he is a man naturally of a sensitive disposition and impulsive temperament—witnesses that he is sustained by a loftier spirit than the mere desire to govern. Admitting

him to be an ambitious man, I remember also that there is a love of truth which has the force of a passion. This is eminently characteristic of men of genius. It produces in them invariably a scorn of hypocrisy, and often a desire, when the world is most merciless in its condemnation, to throw a shield over the popular victim. I have observed of Mr Disraeli that he is animated by this love of truth: to which I trace, therefore, that bitterness of speech which the *Times* has called a taste for personal invective. I trace to it also the patience with which, under circumstances which would have discouraged most men, he has remained the leader of a party which has sometimes failed him. Mr Disraeli has said—and very beautifully said—that justice is “truth in action.” He has written also that “Nemesis favours genius.” In closing this letter, I found upon the truths thus expressed my prediction that, as the splendour of his abilities is already recognised, so—not by a party merely, but by the nation—will be acknowledged before long his public worth. Nor is this all: Nemesis, who favours genius and vindicates justice, requires that,

when we have sufficiently lamented the evils of misgovernment, we shall place at the helm of the State a more skilful pilot than him who now guides it. Because Nemesis favours genius, and truth is its master passion, and because justice is truth in action, Mr Disraeli will be virtual Minister of England.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[Published February 2, 1855.]

SIR,—In my letter of the 26th I said that, if the Turk advanced upon the north of Sebastopol from Eupatoria, he would receive the shock of the Russian movable army in the position in which, above all others, his enemy would wish to place him—viz., his back to the sea.

Now, his ships and Eupatoria—which last may be considered in the light of a *tête de pont*—constitute, of course, his basis ; and it may be urged against me that I violate here the rule in which I place so much faith,—that of breaking an enemy's line of operations. What I meant to convey, however, was, that the Ottomans would be allowed to move along the sea-shore up to the point where the Russian army, attacking them in oblique order, its right thrown forward in the direction of Eupatoria, would compel them so to front as that

nothing but superiority in tactics would save them from annihilation. There are three modes of winning a victory, you are aware,—1st, and best, By means of strategy and tactics ; 2d, By tactics alone; 3d, Without either strategy or tactics, but by the bull-dog courage of your troops. Strategy has to do with the operations of an army previous to a battle ; tactics endeavour to do on the field much of what is best effected by means of strategy. Thus, at Marengo, Napoleon did by strategy and tactics what his enemy endeavoured to repair by tactics alone.

If, then, the Turk really intend, as is alleged, to move along the shore under the protection of the fleet, the Russian need only lie quiet and compact until a short march will bring him on the left flank of his enemy, when, moving up in order of battle, his right thrown forward, he will insure that defeat shall be to the Ottoman destruction. As he has two bases on which to fall back—that of Perekop and that of Kertch, and no doubt intermediate lines of defence—even were he to be outmanœuvred and lose the day, his repulse would not necessarily lead to the ultimate triumph of the

Turk ; whereas the latter, either throwing back his left, or bringing forward his right, would have the sea in his rear, and, supposing the bravery of the troops to be equal, would depend for his existence on a mistake in the execution of the plans of his adversary. The Russian, for instance, might allow his right wing to move too far away from his left, and the Ottoman by crushing it might recover his communications ; or moving, in almost greater defiance of strategy, to his own right, the Turk might outflank the enemy on their left wing, and so save the day. In this case the Russians would fall back on Perekop—in the other they would retire, probably the broken right to Perekop, the left to Bakshiserai or Kertch. In a week or two, however, their army of reserve would move forward and resume the contest with the Ottoman, whose victory, unless he had succeeded in opening communications with his Allies, would have been fruitful thus only of glory and *esprit*.

As to Omer Pacha moving along the shore under the protection of the fleet, the nature of the coast would alone preclude him from relying on such a measure ; and even were the shore level from

Eupatoria to Sebastopol, and the weather admitted of the ships skirting it, he must at length move inland and receive battle. Is it expected that the fleet, having protected his advance, is, in the event of a reverse, to do the same by his retreat?

I said that the Allies had adopted exterior lines in place of interior, and that the Turk could receive no assistance except by sea. It may be replied that his army must be considered, not as acting on a second line of operations, but as being a "great detachment," meant to effect a diversion.

It is contrary to sound strategy to lock up a superior force on one side of a fortress and mountain range, and make a great diversion with an inferior one against the main army of the enemy on the other side; while, though it is possible that a combined attack by the Turks and their Christian Allies on the heights of Inkermann might succeed, it is highly probable that it would prove a disastrous failure,—for while a division or two disputed the defiles with the French and English, and the garrison made a sortie in force, Liprandi menacing Balaklava, the main body of the Russians would probably overpower the Ottomans; or a smaller

force might hold them in check, and the Russians, acting on the "defensive offensive" plan, might assume the initiative against the allied army when the favourable moment arrived.

According to the dictates of strategy, it is the detachment which masks a fortress, and the main army which engages that of the enemy. In the present case—such has been the strategy employed—to act on a double line is absolutely necessary, unless we force the heights of Inkermann, and retrace at the point of the bayonet the course of that flank march so ignorantly lauded by some of your contemporaries. It may even be, that urgent as is the crisis, and Liprandi occupying the country which at one time might have been so easily conquered, we must for the nonce take Eupatoria for a basis. Then let the army that does so be superior in all points to that of the enemy. Let it not be such as must rely on the co-operation of another, which, from all accounts, has enough to do to watch Sebastopol and the division of General Liprandi. And let one of the objects of the operations of this army be to secure a better basis than that of Eupatoria—a worse one could scarcely be.

An army moving from it on Sebastopol would have its line of operations broken by an enemy moving from the Jaalgir or Kertch, and would leave Perekop in its rear; while if it moved eastward, it would expose its line of operations to be broken by the Russian army of reserve now stationed at Perekop.

It is said, however, that Omer Pacha is to occupy Simpheropol. He is, then, to do battle with all comers from Russia, whether advancing by Perekop, or from the mouth of the Jaalgir, whence is supposed to run the military road recently for the first time spoken of, or from Kertch. Had Simpheropol been occupied three months ago by a force, before which the defeated army of the Alma would have retreated into Sebastopol, and which thence could have overrun the Crimea, it would have been well for the credit of our great military authorities. Omer Pacha attempting with his Turks to maintain himself now in Simpheropol, would probably meet with the fate which Mack met at Ulm. Some people imagine that peace is at hand, and try even to exclaim that the Czar has been beaten. It would be in accordance

with the precedents of the Aberdeen Cabinet were a treaty, based on the four points, and leaving Sebastopol untouched, concluded upon the very day that the army of Omer Pacha was overpowered by that of Osten-Sacken.

“True,” the Czar will say, “I have accepted the terms which I once rejected. But in the interval—despite both of Alma and Inkermann—I have vindicated the prestige of my arms ; and for the substantial fruits of my policy, if I can point to no province conquered, I can show the fleet and the army of Turkey annihilated in the presence of yours.”

A more certain way of getting rid of the Ottoman forces, so as to plead the prostration of Turkey as a necessity for her dismemberment, could hardly have been hit upon than thus despatching Omer Pacha and his troops to do battle on the north of Sebastopol. Let us hope, however, that the plan of the Crimean campaign is something better than this. Let us hope for 1855 an improvement on both the strategy and the tactics of 1854.

EDINBURGH, *January 25.*

LETTER IX.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[*Published June 2, 1855.*]

SIR,—My last letter to you was dated the 2d February, and its object was to point out to your readers the necessity for Omer Pacha and his Turkish army remaining as quiescent as they have since remained. Throughout the whole of the Crimean war I have taken, you are aware, an accurate although a comprehensive view of the position and prospects of both armies ; and I shall shortly feel myself entitled to publish a plan of campaign which, early in December last, I submitted to an eminent statesman, not in office, and which will be found to bear a remarkable resemblance to that which appeared lately in the *Moniteur*. I write now merely to make an observation or two upon the new phase.

From Kertch to Kaffa and Arabat there are

sixty miles, and the intervening country is mainly level and suitable for cavalry. Obviously it was not advisable for the Russians to defend the town of Kertch—they have enough to do to watch the extremities of their zone of defence, which includes Kaffa and Arabat to the east, Aloushta and the mountain range to the south, and the old position of the Alma, with the villages neighbouring Eupatoria, to the west and north-west. They hold, remember, a central position, with the object of seizing their opportunity for attack should it offer, and they have an army of reserve stationed near Perekop, biding its time.

I certainly think that the district of Kertch is the key to the Crimea, just as I think that the Crimea is the key to Sebastopol. But however advisable it may be to hold the Straits of Yenikale, and open the Sea of Azoff, I cannot say that I think the town of Kertch is the key to the peninsula of Kertch. It is not surely expected that 15,000 men are to march from the eastern extremity of this peninsula, and sit down before two fortresses at the western extremity of it. Would not the Russian general appear with an

overwhelming force of all arms, especially cavalry, and give a short account of the 15,000 men ?

Look to hear, then, that a much larger force mastered Kaffa and Arabat about the same time that Sir George Brown mastered Kertch ; if not, expect that the enemy will make a desperate stand to prevent us establishing ourselves in this the only safe basis of operations which the Crimea offers us. If we have, as I am not aware that we have, a considerable number of vessels of light draught in the Black Sea fleet, perhaps it was determined to attack the mouth of the peninsula of Kertch from the Sea of Azoff. In this case, it may be that Sir G. Brown re-embarked at Yenikale with the whole of his force, in order to attack Arabat, while a still larger body of troops was to attempt Kaffa from the southern coast. I shall be disappointed if a quantity of wheat, a foundry, and the command of the Sea of Azoff, are the sole fruits obtained by the despatch of a couple of divisions at this crisis of the campaign to a place distant from the true strategical point of the theatre of war—Simpheropol—one hundred and twenty miles. I should be glad to hear

that the army of Eupatoria had given the Russians the slip, and was safely encamped in the district of Kertch,—Eupatoria still, if possible, however, held.

Understand this : The Russian army of Perekop waits on the Turkish army of Eupatoria ; and the Russian army of Simpheropol, as I may call it, abides an attack in the mountain passes, or waits to assume the offensive as soon as the extension of our lines and division of our forces shall invite the battle.

There is much ground for hope, but much also for anxiety. Your correspondent in the Crimea is right when he bids us expect bloodier battles than have yet been fought. I say again, then, as I said when the nation was in its flush of expectation in October last—let us forbear to triumph before conquests have been made.

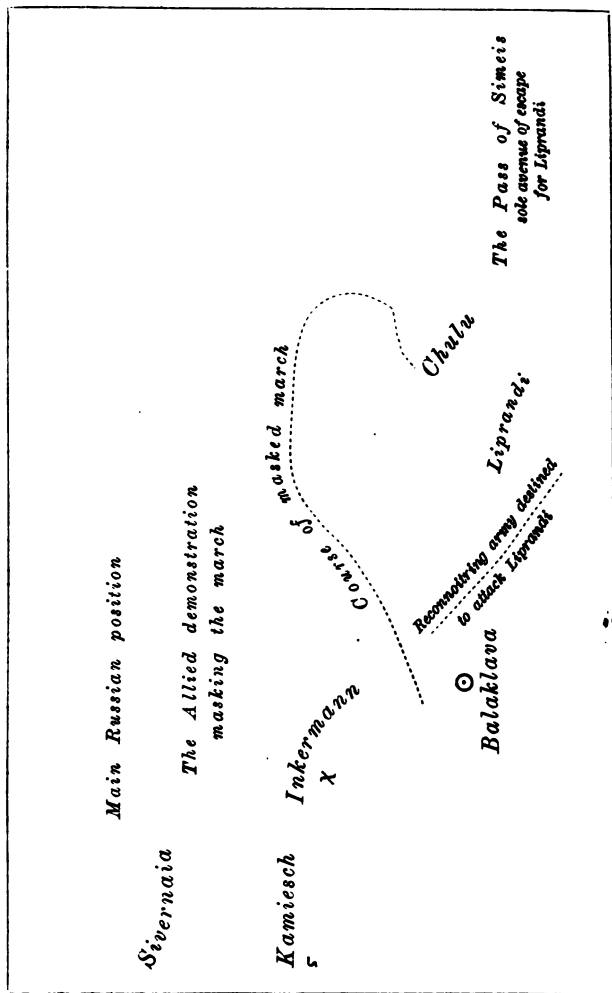
LETTER X.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.

[*Published June 14, 1855.*]

SIR,—Before this letter can reach you, the truth or falsehood of a rumour that a great battle has been fought on the Tchernaya, and General Liprandi's army surrounded, will probably be established. It is pleasing, however, in the absence of contradiction to the report, to persuade oneself that the fact is as stated. With very great diffidence, and well knowing how incompetent I am, and must necessarily be, to form an opinion as to the possibility of carrying out a particular movement in the presence or immediate neighbourhood of a vast enemy in a strong country, I beg to offer you an idea, or speculation, which a survey of one of the lately-published plans of Sebastopol and the surrounding country has suggested to me.

III.



The operation of which I am going to speak would be full of danger if the enemy were prepared for it ; but, after all, so are all important operations of war when once two forces are marshalled within a contracted space of country ; the test of a good general being, not the forbearing to risk the destruction of part of his army, but the knowing when and for what object to risk it. Now, to take Liprandi in reverse, with the view of pressing him at the same time in front, and so destroying the greater part of his force, and laying open the south-eastern country as far as to Aloushta, would be well worth risking a division or two, provided there were grounds to believe that the enemy was off his guard, sent to sleep by our long inactivity, or by the harassing nature of the work of vigilance, and his inability to relieve his troops as often as necessary. It may be that such grounds of hope have existed, and that the following was the plan arranged :—(*vide* Plate III.)

About three miles (not more, I think) from the ridge of Inkermann, and on our side of Khutor Mackenzie, the track to Chulu diverges from

the Bakshiserai road. It runs along, and, I presume, above the heights on which the Russians had established a battery or two, and which (if the *whole* line of the Tchernaya have been taken up, and not merely that to the south-east—but *I am very doubtful*) were occupied lately by General Pelissier, giving ground to the rumour that he had forced those which are to the north and at right angles to these. What is more important still, however, is that this track is found further south—well out of gunshot of the main Russian army—by another which diverges eastwards from the Balaklava road. Now, Chulu is in the mountains, five miles perhaps (but I cannot be certain as to distance, for the plan is not before me) from the junction of the road and track, and still less, of course, from that of the two tracks. It is due east of the camp of Liprandi, which would be taken therefore in reverse. Can it be, then, that a feigned attack was made on the northern heights while a couple of divisions of picked troops (the other heights at right angles to them being won) marched by Chulu on the valley of Tchorgoum, an attack at the hour of

their expected arrival being made on the army of Liprandi from the Balaklava side?

This is a mere idea. If the Cossacks did their duty, and the path, for it is little better, to Chulu, be as defensible as I imagine it to be, Liprandi, being warned of the movement, would frustrate it. His attention, however, may have been taken up by a reconnaissance in force from Balaklava, and by the feigned attack on the northern heights. If such has been the plan, however, and if success has attended it, no ordinary credit is due both to him who conceived and to those who executed it. May something of the kind have happened, and may we learn that the victory has been fruitful of strategical results of the first importance, and not merely of bravery and bloodshed!

Of course I do not know whether such a scheme is practicable or not. I give only an idea which I conceived down at the club this evening, and which I have pondered on in my barrack-room. Nor can I pretend to say what force would be necessary for the operation, the knowledge of military statistics—of “how many men can per-

form such and such a piece of work"—coming principally from that experience which I have had no opportunity of acquiring.

But that, if the path to Chulu be as near as I suppose it to be to the crest of the heights lately seized by the French, and if the allied army in the southern plateau of Sebastopol be as numerous as is imagined, such a combination of attacks would be agreeable to the laws of war, I cannot doubt. The main army of the enemy watching the Allies in this direction has its right on Fort Sivermain, and its left east of Inkermann; it looks, therefore, to the south, abiding an attack in the fortified gorges of the mountains which reach towards Bakshiserai. I know not if the heights opposite those on which our right, or, as I have always thought, our *centre* lately rested, be tenable under the observation of batteries established in those that look southward (and which I have supposed to have been menaced on this occasion in order that the movement on Chulu might be masked)—I know not if this be the case; but if it be, I should not fear for the troops detached to Chulu so far as the army of the north of Sebastopol

could injure them. For say that it descended from its chosen position in order to recover the heights which had been abandoned, and to occupy in force the junction of the road and track, the reserve of the Allies stationed at Inkermann would take it in flank, and the corps which had menaced it in order to mask the strategic march on Chulu falling back on the opposite heights, a battle would be brought on probably in the valley of Inkermann, in place of in the fortified gorges where it had been expected and desired. The real danger to the detachment would be twofold : partly from Liprandi, whom the telegraph and the Cossacks might warn ; and partly from the possibility of its being taken in reverse by troops already stationed near the path to Chulu, with the object of taking them in reverse when they came upon a glen or ravine, walled in on either side, and whence there would be no escape except at the southern gorge. Undoubtedly, also, were the Russian army concentrated so as to bring on a general action by an attack on the angle of ours now resting near the junction of the road and track, and, because thrown forward from

Inkermann, weaker than before—undoubtedly in this case the detachment would be in danger, because so would the whole army be. That observation applies, however, to the position of the Allies considered in its extent from Kamiesch to this junction, and from the latter to Balaklava. Confining myself to the division detached, and supposing the success of the feigned attack on the north to be such that the Russians remained on the defensive, there would be great reason to hope that, by feeling their way carefully, the divisions might avoid being cut off. For, supposing that they found an intrepid enemy and steep defiles insuperable objects to their progress, they could either retrace their steps or fall back to the west down the sides of the mountains towards the Tchernaya. On the other hand, in the happier event of their arrival safe at the decisive point intervening between Liprandi and Bakshiserai, that General must effect his retreat on Aloushta and the Tchatir Dag, and would suffer, no doubt, enormous losses ere he placed between him and his enemy the Pass of Simeis.

But I am guided by my imagination, and by a map, which is perhaps deceiving me. And whatever may be the worth of the idea, your readers will recollect that it is that only of

AN OFFICER,

Who never saw a shot fired.

EDINBURGH, *June 1.*

P.S.—My idea is based on the supposition that the eastern heights opposite Inkermann have been taken possession of. Unless this movement were to mask another, or herald an immediate attack, I cannot, I own, account for it. For to occupy permanently such a position, is to offer the flank of the right centre to the Russians coming from Sivernaia and Bakshiserai. Divide the army into two wings—the extreme left is on Kamiesch, the left centre on Inkermann, the right centre on the opposite heights, and the right on Balaklava—an angular position of which I have already spoken. I should expect the right centre to be attacked from Bakshiserai; and it appears to me to be completely commanded by the north-

ern heights. Can it be that the great cry made in Paris is grounded on the fact that we have re-taken the position from which Liprandi drove us on the 25th October !

THE END.



* BOUND BY *
JOHN GRAY
* EDMONDSON *





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